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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY MAY 31, 2006
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**FORMER PARKWAY BANK VICE PRESIDENT
CHARGED WITH FRAUD AND TAX OFFENSES**

CHICAGO – A former bank officer was charged today with fraud and federal income tax offenses for allegedly obtaining nearly \$500,000 from a customer's credit line and converting the money to his own use. The defendant, **Jeffrey Suspenzi**, was charged with one count of bank fraud and two counts of filing false individual income tax returns in a three-count criminal information filed today in U.S. District Court, announced Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois.

Suspenzi, 34, of South Elgin and formerly of Palatine, was an assistant vice president of Parkway Bank and Trust Company, based in Harwood Heights. He will be arraigned later in U.S. District Court.

Between Dec. 11, 2000, and June 28, 2001, Suspenzi allegedly schemed to embezzle funds from a Parkway Bank customer identified as Individual A, whose accounts he supervised. In the spring of 2001, Suspenzi allegedly caused Individual A's lines of credit to be consolidated and increased from \$1 million to \$1.5 million by persuading Individual A that the credit lines should be consolidated and increased for business purposes. Suspenzi, however, allegedly wanted the credit lines consolidated and increased to embezzle money from the account.

According to the information, on 18 occasions in 2000 and 2001 Suspenzi caused withdrawals totaling \$497,717 to be made from Individual A's line of credit, without Individual A's knowledge or permission, in the form of cashier's checks made payable to Individual A in varying amounts. Suspenzi signed his own name on each of the fraudulently issued cashier's checks as the authorizing bank official, and then allegedly forged Individual A's signature on the back of the checks, endorsed them again with his own signature, and caused Parkway Bank to provide him money from Individual A's credit line for personal use. As part of the scheme, Suspenzi made interest payments to the bank based on the withdrawals and he prevented bank employees from sending account statements to Individual A to conceal the scheme, the charges allege.

The tax counts allege that Suspenzi filed false federal income tax returns for two years, reporting total income in 2000 of \$261,922, and \$115,852 in 2001, when he knew that his total income was substantially greater in both years.

Mr. Fitzgerald announced the charges with Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Byram Tichenor, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division in Chicago.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jeffrey Cramer and Reid Schar.

If convicted, Suspenzi faces the following maximum penalties on each count: bank fraud – 30 years in prison and a \$1 million fine, and filing false tax returns – three years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. The Court, however, would determine the appropriate sentence to be imposed. In addition, defendants convicted of tax crimes must pay the costs of prosecution and they remain responsible for any taxes, penalties and interest due.

The public is reminded that an information contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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